



Department of Conservation
Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources



STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARDS

October 15, 2015

Mr. Michael Montgomery
United States Environmental Protection Agency – Region IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

Dear Mr. Montgomery:

As part of the approved plan to address the compliance issues related to the State's program to regulate Class II injection, the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) and the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) have completed their review of the Category 1 wells. Category 1 wells are those Class II water disposal wells that were permitted for injection into non-exempt, non-hydrocarbon-bearing aquifers or the 11 aquifers historically treated as exempt.

The State's analysis initially determined that 176 wells were permitted to inject into non-hydrocarbon-bearing aquifers with a concentration of total dissolved solids (TDS) of less than 3,000 mg/l (Attachment A) that are either not exempt or are one of the 11 aquifers historically treated as exempt. Of these 176 wells, 83 were permitted to inject into one of the 11 aquifers historically treated as exempt. However, several of these wells are also injecting into zones not considered historically treated as exempt, and as such, are subject to shut in by October 15, 2015. The State has determined that there are 33 wells (Attachment B) that will no longer be allowed to inject after October 15, 2015, unless the state applies for and receives an aquifer exemption from US EPA.

The remaining wells on the list of 176 wells described above will not be required to cease injection by October 15, 2015 for one of the following reasons:

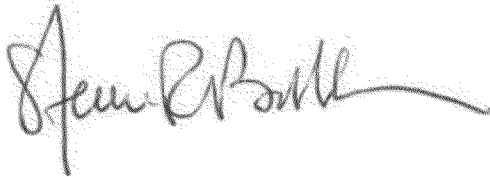
- Upon review, the well is properly categorized as a Category 3, not Category 1 well;
- The operator has relinquished approval to inject;
- The well was converted to an oil and gas production well;
- The well was plugged and abandoned;
- DOGGR has already issued an order to cease injection;
- Upon review, the State has determined that the injected fluid is going into an exempt zone.

In order to determine which of these explanations apply to a specific well, please refer to Attachment A.

In addition to the list of 176 wells that were identified as Category 1 wells, two wells were originally identified as having a TDS above 3,000 mg/l, but have now been determined to have a TDS less than 3,000 mg/l. As such, they will also be required to cease injection by October 15, 2015. These wells are listed on Attachment C. We have been in communication with the operators of these wells to ensure that injection ceases in accordance with the deadline and regulations.

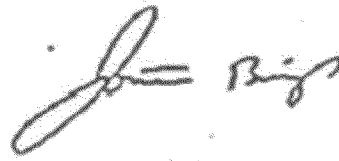
We are committed to continuing to meet the agreed upon schedule to bringing the Underground Injection Control (UIC) program into compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, and we are also committed to revising the State's UIC program with public safety as the first priority. Please let us know if you have any questions regarding the data attached with this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Bohlen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Bohlen
State Oil and Gas Supervisor
Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Bishop", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jonathan Bishop
Chief Deputy Director
State Water Resources Control Board

Attachments

cc: Cliff Rechtschaffen, Senior Advisor, Governor's Office
John Laird, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency
Matthew Rodriguez, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency
David Bunn, Director, California Department of Conservation